

Tape 370

Wanda Ruple Staley
781 North 500 West
Vernal, Utah

Interviewed by Kathi Irving June 7 2004

Transcribed by Marilyn Hunting December 2004

KI: Kathi
Wanda

KI: Would tell me where you were born and your sister's names.

Wanda: On March 23, 1920 I, Wanda Lynn Ruple was born, the daughter of Lilly and Henry (Hod) Ruple. The event took place at my grandparents home at Brush Creek, 12 miles north of Vernal, Uintah County, Utah. The attending physician was Dr. Francke. I have one sister, Billie Ruple, 14 years older than I. She married Gerhardt Ernest Untermann. They were the curators of the museum here. The Field House of Natural History for 23 years.

KI: What did you call him for short?

Wanda: Ernest. Gerhardt was his name and he hated it. Gerhardt Ernest, so they called him Ernest.

KI: I read in something that you wrote that somebody called him Geddy.

Wanda: The family did.

KI: He didn't like the German name?

Wanda: No. But he was born in Germany. His folks had lived here several years before he was born but his mother's family died, the last of them, and they went back to settle the estate and it took longer than they anticipated and he was born while they were there.

KI: So you were born in Brush Creek but your parents were living in Island Park?

Wanda: Yes, the reason the doctor had us ... well Grandmother had been a midwife in the early days and was very capable of taking care of mother.

KI: Your grandmother was whom?

Wanda: Mae Ruple. That was the year the flu was so bad, well the folks hadn't been to town and hadn't been exposed to the flu and the doctor didn't want them to be. So he had them go to Brush Creek and he went up there and delivered me.

KI: How did they get word to him to come?

Wanda: Well, I imagine someone drove down and let him know. They could come to Brush

Creek in a car. Grandfather could have driven down.

KI: Who was your grandparents? Your Dad's mom and dad were?

Wanda: Henry C. Ruple, they called him Hank and Mae Ruple. That's where I was born; where the Phosphate Plant is now.

KI: Who were your mother's parents?

Wanda: Teancum Taylor and Mary Jane Hiatt. Taylor Mountain is named after my grandfather.

KI: Were they still living when you were born?

Wanda: No.

KI: But you do have good memories of your paternal grandparents?

Wanda: Oh Yes. I was 10 years old when Grandfather died. Grandmother lived till 1958. I was married and had children before she died.

KI: Why don't you tell me a little bit about your growing up years.

Wanda: Oh, they were great years. Of course, we lived in Island Park which was an ideal place to raise a family. If you haven't been there, it's a beautiful setting. Dad had lovely ranch there. We had horses, cattle, sheep and of course other animals, chickens, pigs, the whole gauntlet. I think I had the best parents in the world. Mother and Dad always worked together. Mother would go and help Dad, Dad would come and help Mother when she got behind.

I'll have to add a little bit of humor in here. One day she was washing, of course always on the rub board, and Dad came in, I don't know what brought it up, but she told him, she bet she could wring a dish towel dryer than he could. My father had such powerful hands, he knew he could wring it dryer, so he bet her; she reached over on the rack and got the dry dishtowel and wrang it. He knew he had been had. There were a lot of fun times that went along with the hard work.

KI: Did you have to work at a young age?

Wanda: Oh, everybody helped. That was just part of life. Have you ever lived on a ranch?

KI: No, I haven't.

Wanda: It's just part of life. Everybody helped.

KI: What kind of chores did you have?

Wanda: Well, it was according to how old I was. As I grew older I milked cows, I always fed

chickens, that was fun, gathered eggs. Helped feed the pigs. One year I raised a pet pig.

KI: What happened to the pet pig?

Wanda: As he grew older he was put in the pen and treated the same as the other pigs. Went to slaughter. He was a cute little pet. I had my own horse, cats and dogs. We always raised a big garden and mother did a lot of canning. It was just a family oriented life. Everybody worked together.

KI: Did Billie stay there on the ranch with you. If she was 14 years older did she leave and you were left the only one child at home? Were there ranch hands?

Wanda: Yes, there were ranch hands. Billie was away at school. She boarded with Downy's, people by the name of Downy and went to school. When she graduated from high school, she went to Berkley and went to the university there. Then she married Geddy and they lived in San Francisco and she commuted back and forth from San Francisco to Berkley. She got a degree in geology. She had a masters degree in geology and palenotology.

KI: Is that what her husband had as well? What were they doing in San Francisco?

Wanda: Well, he worked for a Ford Agency, called Reminsburger Brothers. I don't know why they chose the San Francisco area. Maybe because he had lived there before and liked it. He had lived a number of places in the United States.

KI: Can you think of anything particular that happened at the ranch when you were growing up that was a really good memory for you.

Wanda: Oh there was so many. I always loved my horse. I had a lot of good times with him. His name was Bobby. He was a dark gray, blue gray, they called him. Then Mother would take me swimming. Dad had a settling pond that he let me swim in. He wouldn't let me swim in the river, because of the currents. Mother didn't always swim with me but she would go up to be with me while I swam.

We'd go fishing. Mother and I did a lot of hiking. Those were all good times. The family had a lot of good times. Members of the family would come and we'd have picnics or get together.

KI: Would these be cousins? Did you have a lot of cousins?

Wanda: Yes, some. I wouldn't say a lot. There were four, especially that came a lot. Five I should say. They were from two different families.

KI: Whose families were those?

Wanda: The four were from Mother's side of the family and the one was from my Dad's side of the family. They lived in Arizona and he would usually come and stay for a couple of months in

the summer.

He and I were the same age so we really enjoyed the company.

KI: Were there any families close to where you were?

Wanda: It was 18 miles to our nearest neighbor.

KI: How did you go to school?

Wanda: Mother taught me most of the time. Mother would usually come in and bring me and stay for a month or so in the fall and I'd get started and she would get my books and instructions and we'd go home. She and dad would teach me. Dad usually taught me arithmetic and she taught me the rest. I did quite well coming through grammar school; in the sixth grade I went to San Francisco and spent that winter with Billie and Geddy in San Francisco.

KI: That must have been an adventure for a little country girl.

Wanda: Oh it was a terrible change. I had been used to so much freedom, then to go on a city lot, our school was locked from the time school took up till it let out in the afternoon. You had to have a pass to get in or out, there was always someone at the gate. It was really different.

Billie was working three days a week in Berkley and she was still going to school three days a week. So she was gone all but Sunday. Geddy's father, Ernest Sr. was living with them. He was the artist; you may have seen his paintings here. He was my salvation. He was a gruff old German that most kids would have been afraid of, but he was good to me. He was home most of the time.

Bless his heart, he would take me to the park, we lived close to Golden Gate Park, and he would sit and paint while I played. He would always get seated close so he could watch the playground. He would take me to museums or Flash-hackers Zoo. He was just my salvation.

KI: When you were going to grammar school here, and you would just come for a while, did you go to Central?

Wanda: Yes.

Kathi: Did you board with someone when you came down?

Wanda: No, Mother would just come in stay a few days with me or if the grandparents were down for a few days, I would stay with them.

KI: Do you remember any of the teachers here?

Wanda: Oh yes, Mary Whitmere was my first teacher, Stella Richards my second teacher. Betty Greenfield my third grade teacher, Alice White fourth, John Stagg and McNaughton [Johnny] were fifth grade then I went to San Francisco for the sixth. Then the seventh and eighth grade. For the seventh grade we went to the Board of Education and Mother got my curriculum and my

books and all the instructions and then I was to go back there and take my exam. Final exam. I had finished it before Christmas, when we came in before Christmas.

KI: The whole thing?

Wanda: Yes. When you work alone you can go so much faster than you do when you're in a class. So there is a lot of merits to home schooling. But there is things that kids miss too. But at any rate, when we came in before Christmas to take my examination, I think it was Rhoda DeVed, if I remember right that gave me the exam. Anyway, I didn't know anything, the material was all foreign to me. She got to checking and they had given me eighth grade books. So she gave me the 8th grade examination and I passed it with flying colors, so then I had to go back and take the 7th grade the last half of the year. So I took both grades the same year.

KI: What did you do the next year.

Wanda: The next year I went to Uintah High for the 9th grade. I was a year younger than the others.

I boarded with Ann and Ike Burton, to begin with. It would have been great, because it was close to school and things. But she was very old fashioned and wouldn't let me go to any of the school functions. That kind of handicapped me and I really needed the social side of it. That didn't work out too well. By then my grandmother had a little different circumstance, she had had an older couple living with her that she was taking care of and they made other arrangements so I went and stayed with her the rest of the year. That was in town but I had long walk, she lived about where the state's gas pumps are now, on North Vernal Avenue. She lived a block off from Vernal Avenue. So I had to walk from there to where the Middle School is now, where the swimming pool is. Which was quite a long walk in the cold winter months. But I was much happier.

KI: When you did get involved with the social things; what did you do? What did you like to do?

Wanda: I enjoyed going to the school dances. The ball games, all school functions. I enjoyed all of them

KI: Were you ever in the band or clubs?

Wanda: No, I did join a speaking group.... public speaking, which I needed. It did me a lot of good. I had friends that lived in Jensen and quite often on weekends, I would go home with one of them. I had three girl friends that lived down there.

KI: Did they get bused in here?

Wanda: Yes. At that time you did.

KI: When did you graduate from high school?

Wanda: 1937.

KI: You had yearbooks then; I know there was a year during the Depression that they didn't have enough money to do a yearbook.

Wanda: Well, I didn't have a picture in the book. I went to California again.

KI: So you only went to Nine, Ten and Eleven?

Wanda: No, I just went to the 9th grade here. Then I went back to California and lived in San Francisco. I didn't quite finish, but I did finish through correspondence course. I got my graduation from that?

KI: Why was that? Why did you take the correspondence?

Wanda: Well, it was difficult to go to California, it was difficult for my folks to come in here, to find someplace to board, it was easier. See I had been raised mostly on home schooling, so it wasn't foreign to me.

KI: So you just went to California for those years then you came back to the ranch and finished? Was Billie still there in California?

Wanda: They didn't move until 1936. The second year I was in San Francisco it was much easier. I knew what to expect and Billie was home on weekends and we were able to do more things together. She and I played a lot of tennis together, which was good for both of us.

I went to Polytechnic High which was on the edge of Golden Gate Park and we could look from the third story, right down in on Kezar Stadium. The last period of the day I had bookkeeping and usually if there was a ball game he'd let us go to the window and watch the ball game. There was six girls and six boys that ran around together, we didn't date, we were just all friends in a group. We'd meet and usually ride the street car to wherever we were going. To one of the kid's parents house. We had a lot of fun together, if we'd go to movies, we'd all six go. I guess there was safety in numbers. It was a fun time, there was no stress like dating or anything like that. Just a school group.

KI: So did you come the last 3 months of school or just when?

Wanda: Not till school was out.

KI: Where were you when you were taking the correspondence school?

Wanda: That was the next year of school.

KI: The 9th grade was here, the 10th grade was in San Francisco.

Wanda: And the 11th and 12th I took at home. The correspondence course.

KI: Ernest and Billie came back here to live the last of your high school years?

Wanda: Yes they were here while I was taking correspondence course. They came to help at the ranch. They were tired of the city life. They wanted to get out. That was a very, very hard winter. The snow was deep and a lot of animals died. My father was under a lot of stress. I don't think he was in the best of health. Usually in the spring we would move down to Rainbow, which was six miles from the ranch to shear and lamb the sheep. We lived in a the sheep wagon and a tent. While we were down lambing the sheep my father got hurt; he was so used to roughing it and wouldn't come in. By the time he did come in his appendix had ruptured and he lived a couple of days. He died the 30th of May 1937. It was a terrible shock. As I said in my history, my world changed, of course, mother's too because it left quite a burden on her. Billie and Ernie could see that without Dad and the livestock, there wouldn't be enough at the ranch to keep all of us going, so they moved to Medford, Oregon where Ernie had lived before. That was hard on Mother, to have Billie move away again. That summer ... well, she and I did a lot together to break the tension. It was just a difficult time. She sold the sheep that summer to Bry Stringham. Dad's brother had been living in Montana and he moved back to Vernal that year. He was older than Dad. So he and his wife went to the ranch and stayed over there and took care of things for Mother. His brother, Art. Towards spring his wife became ill and she passed away; so Mother had to move back to the ranch. He wouldn't stay over there alone. There had been so many changes in her life. She married Joel Evans. I don't have any hard feelings toward Joel, he was very good to us kids, he was very fair with us. But it never was the same, course things never are. Mother had left the estate, when she passed away, which was just a few years later. She had left the estate in undivided shares to Joel, Billie and I, equal. Billie wanted to sell hers, which she sold to Clark Feltch. We separated ours from Joel's and that is the property I have in Island Park yet. Mother had a heart condition and with all the stress and everything it took it's toll. Dad in '37 and Mother died in '45.

KI: Do you think at that time period it was difficult for a woman, a widow, to live without her husband?

Wanda: With the size of the ranch she just couldn't run it alone. Especially with a heart condition like Mother had, she just couldn't do it. But at any rate, I took the property which was Dad's desert entry, it's on Garden Creek, it's back about a mile off from the river. We built it up, we built us a little house there, which after my husband died, it burned down; it was struck with lightening, that's what caused it. My family and I have rebuilt it.

KI: Did you and your husband go up and take care of it or did you use it as a "get-away"?

Wanda: We used it mostly for recreation, although we did lease it to grazing. I had a grazing permit with it.

KI: Do you remember how many acres there all together were when your dad had it?

Wanda: 1600 and something. This part that I have has 320 acres.

KI: Let's go back a little bit –tell me what happened after you finished school and after your father had died. Did you get married right a way?

Wanda: Died in May and I got married the next January. But in the meantime, Mother and I had moved into Vernal; we rented a rather large house and she took school teachers in to board and room.

KI: Where was the house located?

Wanda: It was on the corner of 5th West and Main Street on the southwest corner. It has been gone for years. Where Basin Sports is now.

KI: Did you meet your husband in Vernal?

Wanda: No, I had met him just before my father died. Well, I'm getting things mixed up here. When we moved into town, I went to work in a little bakery that was in town, Evan's Bakery on South Vernal Avenue. I worked there for a short time. Then I also did some work for Ma Gibson, up at the Gibson Hotel which was on Main Street. Then I got a chance to go to work for Dr. Clark, a physician here in Vernal, in his home.

KI: Where was he living?

Wanda: He was renting the Bus Hatch home. Bus Hatch was in Salt Lake at that time. It's on 2nd North and Second East.

KI: Did you quit working when you got married?

Wanda: Yes. Well, I think my job ended before I got married. Dr. Clark moved about that time to Salt Lake and I just didn't look for another job. We were married the First of January and we rented a two room house from Jim and Arlene Chivers where Inkley's is now. There was no plumbing and we had to get water from outside. Course, we didn't need much.

KI: Were the Martin's still next door?

Wanda: Yes. We rented it for \$10 a month. Carl was working from 7 at night till 7 in the morning - 12 hours for \$45 a month. He was working in the café. But that was during the depression, you were lucky to be able to work.

KI: What Café?

Wanda: None that's here now. – Alexander's.

KI: I have to go back a little. Tell me what was your wedding like.

Wanda: Oh it was just a simple wedding, at home. We invited our closest family and friends. Mother had a nice dinner for us, that was it. It was during the Depression and there was no money then. I'll go back and tell you something else that kind of shows you what the Depression was. When I went to San Francisco, I thought we were very poor, which we were, everybody was. But when I saw people living on the beach, families, little kids, and the only shelter they had was sticking driftwood in the sand and putting cardboard boxes over it, now in the rainy season, that's not much shelter. They were existing on soup lines. I came home, even though we wore patched clothes and things, thinking we were pretty well off. We had all we wanted to eat and a warm house. In a small community, people help one another much more than they do in the city.

After Carl and I were married, his father by that time had leased the White River Coal Mine out nine miles above Rangely on White River. He wanted Carl to come out — well Carl didn't that year but next fall he went out to work for his father. There just wasn't any good jobs around. We lived in a boarded-up tent. We had a wood frame that came up four feet high then the tent was pitched on top of this. We weren't in the dirt, we had a wood floor, but that was about it. We had plenty of coal but when the fire was out the tent was cold. So we had to keep a good fire. We were happy and we had a good time.

KI: How did you cook in there?

Wanda: On a stove. About this big. It was about 30 inches square, I'd say. It had an oven and I could bake and do whatever I wanted to on it.

KI: Did you have worry about the stovepipe getting too hot and set the tent on fire?

Wanda: No, you took care of those things while you fixing it. There is a metal plate that goes around the opening that holds the tent away from the stovepipe.

KI: So what was inside this tent? A little place for cooking and a little place for sleeping?

Wanda: There was a bed at the back of the tent. It was a 10 x12 tent, I think. The bed was in the back of the tent. I had a chest of drawers and then there was a little makeshift cupboard for my dishes and cooking things. Then on the other side, there was a table and another little cupboard. On that cupboard there was a place for a wash basin and a bucket of water.

KI: Where did you dry the clothes in the winter, they just hang around the house?

Wanda: You hung them outside, they froze and you brought a few in at time. I think I could manage it again if I had too. A lot better than these young people could. I melted snow for water. The snow was deep and we melted snow for water. That's an experience if you haven't ever done it.

KI: So were there other families around there?

Wanda: Carl's mother and dad and the miners lived up the draw a little ways. The ones that

stayed out there, up above what we called the scale house. Chuck and June Hadlock lived by us part of the time, but June had a baby and wasn't able to stay out after the weather got real bad. But Chuck stayed and boarded with us.

KI: In your little 10x12 tent.

Wanda: There was room for three people at the table.

KI: How did you get your food? Did you go into town?

Wanda: We went to Rangely, it was 9 miles. We had a little Model A Ford.

KI: Was that your job?

Wanda: Carl would usually go with me. Then they would deliver coal. But most of our groceries came by mail. The mail came from Meeker three days a week and we could leave a note over at the mailbox for the store in Rangely and they would pack our groceries and send them back on the mail.

KI: How long did you live at the coal mine?

Wanda: Oh –off and on for ten years. I came into Vernal when my babies were born, stayed for a month or two then I'd go back.

KI: It was okay to have your little children there at the tent?

Wanda: O we had moved into a house before our children were born. This was just the one winter that we lived there. We moved into a one room house. It was about 16 foot square, we had quite a little bit more room.

KI: How many children did you have by the time you left there?

Wanda: Five.

KI: What years were they born?

Wanda: Ilene was born January 19, 1940. Hod was born December 3, 1941, I was in bed when Pearl Harbor was bombed, which was a bad time. Earl, July 23, 1943, Raymond was born March 10, 1945, Linda November 6, 1946.

KI: Did Carl have to go to war?

Wanda: No, he was frozen on the job at the mine. It was an essential industry. He couldn't even join.

KI: What did he do after that 10 years - you had your 5 children, then you moved away from the

mine?

Wanda: We moved in 1949 and bought this place. There wasn't a house, there was a building here, it was a chicken coop. It had never been used as a chicken coop but that's what they had built it for. It had a low ceiling. We bought the place and lived over in that house. We lived there and raised our children. After my husband died, I didn't need that much room.

KI: When did he die?

Wanda: Carl died in May 1964. We lost our oldest son in 1954. He was killed by a drunken driver. We were out to Springville, visiting friends. We had just taken the kids on a little trip before school started. We went to down and stayed with these friends – their kids had bikes and the kids had been taking turns riding bikes and this drunk driver hit him and killed. He was not quite 13. It's a nightmare to me yet, when I see kids almost get hit on bicycles. It's something you don't get over.

KI: So you lived here and then what did your husband do? Did you ever work?

Wanda: Yes. While we were out to the mine, I cooked for miners part of the time. I went to the scale house and weighed trucks some of the time. I worked most of my life. After we moved in here, the first couple of years I didn't work. When we left the mine, Carl had to have his operated on. He'd had an injury in the mine and he had to have it done while he was still under their insurance. He went to Salt Lake and had it done. We had rented a place up in Glines Ward. We hadn't found this place yet when we rented that. He wasn't able to do much when he first got home, so he went to work for Fashion Cleaners delivering cleaning and laundry, he didn't have to be on his knee a lot. Then after his knee got better, he went to work for Herb Snyder as deputy sheriff.

KI: Did he work only for Herb or did he work for others.

Wanda: Yes he worked for [Norman Fletcher]

KI: What was it like being married to a cop?

Wanda: Well, it isn't good. You wonder when they go out if they are going to come back, there is always that possibility. Their hours — Carl got a phone call one day at the sheriff's office and this woman was very irrate, she said how many hours do you put in in this office? He said, Ma'am, were available 24 hours a day, we're not always in the office but we are available. During that time there was the Rodeback murder. That was tragic. The day they found her body in the canal, my oldest daughter, Ilene and Rosaline Stewart and another girl went up to the Brush Creek Cave and got lost, they were looking for her. That was a terrible 24 hours.

KI: What finally led them up there?

Wanda: They told us where they were going. We knew where to look for them but finding them

in the cave—they had gotten cold, so they started a little fire in there. The wood was damp and it just smoked, that was the real danger, was the smoke. They sent the dogs in after them. Someone asked Ilene later, weren't you afraid of the dogs? She said if it had been a bear I'd of hung on to him.

KI: I read that story. Their flashlights had stopped working, that was what the problem was.

Wanda: Then the boy that had killed the Rodeback girl took off and went upon the ridge and the officers had to go after him. Carl called me and said bring me my 30.06, I'm not going up there empty handed. They were armed with their pistols but he wanted his rifle. That was horrible to take that to him, I knew somebody was going to get killed. Course, when they found him, Dow, he had already killed himself. It wasn't as bad as I had anticipated. There were many other incidents. The Indians would drink a lot. They were always picking Indians and taking them to jail. I remember on night I was working at the café—I had gone to work at the café for Brownie Hatch and Carl had come to pick me up and take me home. On our way home he got a call, this drunken Indian had run off the road up here. He whirled around and went to see about him. The Indian said, Oh, Staley, not again. Carl called him by name and said yes, you're going to jail. He put him in the back, brought me home and took him to jail. More than once he would start home with me and he would get a call where he couldn't take me. I'd just have to get out wherever we were. I was pretty good at walking anyway.

KI: What other places did you work? This was called Brownie's Café?

Wanda: It was called the Sage Café. Well, it was called the Commercial Grill then developed into the Sage. I worked for the Wings Department Store. She was the sweetest thing. I just loved her

KI: Oh, how was they to work for. I haven't ever talked to anyone that worked for them.

Wanda: Oh, she was the sweetest little old thing. I just loved her.

KI: What did they sell there? It was on Main Street wasn't it?

Wanda: Yes. Dry goods. Shoes, all kinds of dry good, sheets, towels, men and women clothing, all kinds.

KI; Jenny was a pretty nice lady?

Wanda: She was wonderful

KI: She didn't have a husband at that time.

Wanda: As her health failed she hired a manager, Charlie Eline, he was from Idaho, he was great to work for. He knew his business.

KI: What did you do at the store?

Wanda: Salesperson . Ashton's bought Wing's then I went to work for Ashton's. I can't remember what year it was they bought that. It was in the late '50's I'm sure.

After that I took some time off. I had married Archie Richardson by then, so I didn't have to work.

KI: This is after your husband died. This after you worked for Ashton's or after you worked for Wing's. I wanted to know what you did at Ashton's.

Wanda: I did the same thing. I was a sales clerk. I worked in the dry goods department, I was under Hal Duke. At Christmas time it was odd, Stew or Mary Ashton would come in - what can we do to help you. Everybody was busy doing more than they could do. What can we do to help you. Ralph or Virginia would come in and it was DO THIS or Get OVER THERE AND DO THAT. Do this or do that. That was just the difference in them. I just loved Stew and Mary. Course Stew and I went to school together, so I always liked Stew. Everybody liked Stew.

KI: How did your husband die?

Wanda: Heart attack. When the dial system came in for the telephone, I went to work for the telephone company on their survey. They did a complete survey of the valley. We went to every house. If people weren't home somebody would have to go back, we had to make contact with everyone. Anyway, that was different and it was fun, that lasted about 3 or 4 months. By that time Gambles were moving in here. I put my name to be contacted, well, I didn't hear anything from them, I thought they had hired somebody else. Then I got a call and they said, why haven't you been in. We're opening such and such a time and we need to start stocking shelves we want you here tomorrow. So I went to work tomorrow. It was a good job I worked for Kay Patitz. Gambles was just east of the Cobble Rock Station. They were very good to work for, very good to me. I was thankful I had a job there when Carl died. Carl died of a heart attack, I was at work and Dr. Stringham called me and told me about Carl. He'd had a heart attack on the job and he didn't live for them to get him into the doctor. He had gone into plumbing and was working for Milt Hacking. I can't remember how long he worked for Milt Hacking.

KI: He just worked for the sheriff department under two sheriff's then he went into plumbing after that? All these little tragedies--so then were you able to just continue your job and take care of your kids?

Wanda: Yes. My oldest daughter was married, the two boys, Earl and Raymond, both got married the same year that Carl died. Raymond had planned to get married before Carl died. They already had their invitations sent out. They were going to cancel it and I said no, he was happy with it, just go ahead with it. Earl was married in August. So I just had Linda left at home. She had another year of high school. She and I toughed it out. When she went away to school, I was left alone, that's when I married Archie. He and I took a job out in the Bookcliffs, cooking for a seismograph crew. We were out there for five months. It was a good job, it was hard work but we had a lot of fun too.

KI: Let's back up. I was wondering if you were involved in any community organizations during

this time period, Clubs or anything like that.

Wanda: I have always belonged to DUP. I've not been much to join clubs. During the kids growing up I helped with 4-H, Cubs Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts. I was president of PTA the first year the high school moved to where the Jr. High is now.

A few years later, I with George Long started the Historical Society. He and I started it with the help of others. George was the first president and I was the second. Then when Tom Freestone started the archeological group I was a charter member of it and past president.

KI: Did you like archeology a lot. Did your interest get peeked by your sister and brother-in-law?

Wanda: Oh, probably. We have always been interested in rocks, geology, well, science in general. It was just something that was of interest to me.

KI: What kind of activities did you do with them? What was it called - the Uintah Basin Archeological Society.

Wanda: We have monthly meetings. It's still in existence. We try to go on several trips during the summer months. We didn't much last year because it was so hot and dry. I haven't been too active this past year, I have had shingles.

KI: What kind of things did you and Archie do?

Wanda: Dancing - just regular things.

KI: Did he pass away?

Wanda: Yes, he also died of a heart attack. We had planned a little week-end excursion with my one son and his family. He was going to shave and get the camper ready. I went over to get the groceries. When I came back, I could hear his razor running, I went in the bedroom, he always shaved in there by the bedroom mirror and there he lay on the floor. I called the EMT's, well I started artificial respiration and mouth to mouth on him but I couldn't get any response, and they couldn't either.

KI: What year did he die?

Wanda: Archie died in '77.

KI: Do you remember any controversial issues in Vernal?

Wanda: Yes, I never was involved too much in them. My daughter was. When they bought the ground for the Fair Grounds and built the Western Park. There was a lot of controversy and a lot of unhappy people. It was the way they handled it. They come in and took their property, they gave them very little for it. They condemned it. I think Bigelow just ramroded it through, he no right to. I don't have any respect for Bigelow because I know things that he had done.

KI: That's Nyle Bigelow, he was county commissioner at that?

Wanda: I know very crooked things that he's done. I don't have proof for them but I know they happened. There had been lots of controversy.

KI: You mentioned the Indian alcohol consumption problems here. There were saloons - bars downtown that aren't really there much anymore. You don't see that now.

Wanda: They were pool halls. Saloons ended long before - they ended with probation.

The Indians were not prepared for their money. I heard one of the Arrowchis' give a lecture, it was when they knew they were going to get their money but they hadn't gotten it yet. He said my people are not ready for this yet, it will do a lot of harm. He was right. They would buy cars, wreck them. They weren't ready for it, there was a lot of sadness that went with it.

KI: Do you remember when they built the dams around here. Was that hailed as a great thing or was there controversy about that.? I know there was with the Echo Park.

Wanda: Oh yes. In fact Geddy went back to Washington and testified for the dam.

KI: I've heard stories about Red Fleet, the same sort of thing, they came in and condemned property.

Do you remember that?

Wanda: Yes but I wasn't involved with any of that.

KI: Do you remember any big, exciting things in the community?

Wanda: Yes. When the Field House was first built. Billie and Ernie was invited to join the staff; that was in the planning stages and they took a trip to visit several museums in the East to help them better plan for it - the displays and so forth. They were there for 23 years before they retired. They were out one year when unfortunate things happened. They asked Geddy if Billie would go back in again. She did but that is when she developed cancer and Geddy finished out her term. They worked for the State.

KI: You told me when they lived in San Francisco he worked for the Ford Company so, was your sister the trained, educated, geologist or did he also have education.

Wanda: He had education along with hers. He didn't have the masters degree that she had, I think he had a bachelors. Whatever she studied, he studied along with her.

KI: Did they have children?

Wanda: No.

KI: Do you think they would like the new Field House?

Wanda: Oh, I think they would be very proud of it.

Another thing that we are very proud of, is our DUP Museum. We worked very hard for that.

KI: Tell me some of the circumstance about it.

Wanda: We had bake sales, we had rummage sales, we baked chicken pies and sold them. Mrs. Pack lived over here at that time and they had chickens and she would furnish the chicken and I would go over and help her and we'd make pie crusts , we put out pies by the 100's. We sold them at different outlets. Naples Ward bought quite a few of them. We had quite a lot of support.

KI: Do you remember when they moved the little rock building? That was during your time period?

Wanda: Yes. Our fund raising paid for the moving, buy the ground, the whole bit.

KI: Who had the artifacts that are in there right now?

Wanda: The people of the valley.

KI: How did you get hold of them?

Wanda: Well, they brought them to us. We had collected quite a few but we had no place to store them. A lot of those things take care to store.

KI: You still have that one chair in there that was owned by Dr. Hullinger?

Wanda: Yes.

KI: So did his family just have these things and they were safe guarding them until the museum came around?

Wanda: Yes. There is a little stove in the back, it's about this big square, it has oven doors that open on each side. It's a Royal Oak. There were four stoves ordered for the Fort over at Fort Duchesne; when they arrived they weren't what they wanted, so they gave them to the people of the Basin. That was the first stove sold here in the Valley. My grandpa Ruple bought one, my grandpa Taylor bought one, Pardon Dodds bought one and I don't know who bought the other one. But the one that Grandpa Ruple bought is the one over in the museum. The first boat we had on Island Park is in the Museum. There is a lot of relics in there.

Billie was one of the main pushers to get that museum going. She and Ernie worked very hard, they worked very hard in building it. I have taken my turn in sitting there for years but this

year I haven't been able to.